

Johannes Luyster House
Holland, Middletown Township
Monmouth County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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Johannes Luyster House
Holland, Middletown Township
Monmouth County, New Jersey

Owner (and occupant): Mr. John Peter Luyster
(P.O. address: Laurel Avenue at Middletown Rd.,
Keyport, New Jersey)*

Date of Erection: 1717-1718, with rear addition 1862

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Johannes Luyster (1691-1756)

Present Condition: Original with alterations and additions, but well maintained. One of two front entrances changed to window. Dormer windows modern. Mantels replace originals about 1840.

Number of Stories: One and one-half over cellar

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - stone masonry
Exterior walls - timber frame, shingled
Interior walls - frame studding, lathed and plastered
Chimneys - brick built into inside of gable end walls
Roof - gable of two different slopes and with wide overhanging eaves front and rear, covered with modern asphalt shingles over older wood shingles

Historical Data:

The identification of this Dutch Colonial farmhouse by discovery of the name of its original owner in documents contemporary with its time of erection, in verification of the family records and tradition, is reported as follows.

*The house stands on the north side of Middletown Road, about 400 feet east of Laurel Avenue in the village of Holland, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Village of Middletown.

By deed of 1st January 1716/17, Peter Wyckoff of Flatlands, Kings County "on the Island of Nassaw" (Long Island, N.Y.) conveyed to Johannes Luyster "of the poor Bowery, in the Township of Newtown, within Queens County", on the same island and to John Brower of said Flatlands, certain tracts of land in Monmouth County. The one of these on which the house here considered is located is described in this deed as including the eastern half of a 90 acre tract in Middletown which Daniel Hendrickson* of that place sold to John Gysbertsen formerly held and occupied by John Whitlock, the lines beginning one chain (66 ft.) east of Gerit's Bridge** and one south from Gerit's Brook, "the small brook coming from the hills", thence running south 34 chains to the line of the late Wm. H. Whitlock, east 33 chains to Mahoras Brook, as the brook flows to Bog Run, up that run to its head in the lower end of the Bog, and west 22 chains along the edge of the Bog to the place of beginning, this tract containing 104 acres.(a) By an agreement dated 18 October 1727, the two grantees divided the tract as surveyed, the original map thereof being in this house to the present day.

*The house of this Daniel Hendrickson, next west of the one here considered has been surveyed as NJ-498.

** Evidently so-called for Gerit or Jarrett Wall, an early landowner here.

(a) Original deed remains in the house, from which this abstract made. This deed is incorrectly quoted in the account of this house publ. in R.F. Bailey, Pre-Rev. Dutch Houses & Families in 1936, pp. 405 and 422, stating that Peter Wyckoff was grantee, also that this house was built 1727-1730. An earlier date is suggested by the record that on "May the 26th 1718, Johannes Luyster gave in his Earmark to be recorded.....and his Brand Mark for his Horses." (Middletown, Mon. Co., N.J., Cattle Earmarks, publ. in Stillwell, Hist. & Genealog. Misc., II, 207).

Johannes Luyster(b) the grantee abovenamed, evidently removed from Newtown, L.I. to the tract thus acquired in Middletown within the seventeen months between the date of the deed and that of the recording of his cattle and horses marks in the latter place on 26 May 1718. Accordingly, the erection of the original (front) unit of the house here surveyed is ascribed to him and dated 1717-1718.

The present owner and occupant, Mr. John Peter Luyster, a descendant of Johannes Luyster the progenitor of the family in Monmouth County, informs us that the original farm has always since remained in the family and that its successive owners, according to his written record as follows.

From Johannes Luyster (1691-1756) the farm passed to his son Peter Luyster (1719-1810), grandson John P. Luyster (1763-1848), great grandson Peter Luyster (1806-1875), great great grandson Garret Sutphin Luyster (1843-) and to the great great great grandson John Peter Luyster, owner at the time of our survey of the house in October 1940.

(b) Johannes³ Luyster, b. 22 Mar. 1691, Flatlands, Kings County, L.I., N.Y., d. 29 Jan. 1756, Middletown, Mon. Co., N.J., son of Cornelis Pieterse Luyster of Flatbush 1696 and later of the Poor Bowery, Newtown Twp., Queens Co., L.I., mar. 16 Apr. 1716 in Flatbush, Lucretia Brower, b. 12 Aug. 1688, who d. 12 Apr. 1771, and they removed from the Poor Bowery after 1 Jan. 1717 and bef. 26 May 1718, (on which latter date he entered the earmarks of his cattle for record in the town books at Middletown, N.J.) Issue viz. Sarah b. 8 Mar. 1717, Peter b. 5 May 1719, Cornelia b. 13 Dec. 1720, Johannes b. 25 May 1723, Anna b. 8 Apr. 1725, and Lucretia b. 30 Aug. 1727. (Records of Ref. Dutch Ch. of Flatbush, L.I., publ. by Holland Society of N.Y. Bible records in poss. of Luyster family in Middletown, N.J., publ. in Stillwell's Hist. & Genealog. Miscellany, II, 359-361. A.V.D. Honeyman, Joannes Nevius & His Descendants. 1900, p. 592).

The last named also states that the rear portion of the house was an addition by Peter Luyster in 1862. Examination of the front of the older unit of the house showed us that one of two entrance doorways had been later changed to a window of size larger than the others in that elevation.* The different pitch of the front and the rear slopes of the gable roof is a device used in Dutch houses on Long Island, whence its builder came, and is entirely unlike the equal-pitch gables or gambrels of Dutch houses in Bergen County, New Jersey. (Cf. the Lefferts House, Flatbush, L.I.) The photograph of our survey drawing, bound herewith, restores the appearance of the house before alteration. This use of twin entrances, the one to the kitchen and the other to the living room, is found peculiar to the houses of this class of "Low Dutch" (Flemish) settlers in the early 18th century in the northeastern counties of New Jersey. In an otherwise native economy in design, they may be considered an extravagance.

The photograph of an "old Rapalje" silver spoon belonging to Mr. Luyster, the present owner of the house, shows the initials of its maker, Jacob Boelen (1654-1729) of New York City and those of an owner, S.D.R. The last evidently indicate Sarah³ Danielse Rapalje, who was born 1st July 1687, daughter of Daniel² Jorise Rapalje of the Wallabout, Brooklyn. She married 30 April 1713, Peter Luyster of the Poor Bouwery, Newtown, and had a daughter Antje⁴ born 9 January 1726, died 23 Nov. 1799, who married 25 May 1756 her first cousin, Peter Luyster of Middletown, New Jersey (1719-1810) named above as one time owner of the house here surveyed. The spoon evidently thus came into this branch of the family.

* An oil painting of the house in 1860 is said to be in the possession of Mr. John Cherry of Keyport, New Jersey, grandson of the artist, David P. Van Brackle.

Reference:

The original deed of 1 January 1716/17 cited above, examined at the house by Oscar F. Benjamin, H.A.B.S. research editor, and information on the successive owners as stated to him by the present owner

Lewis D. Cook
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer